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今日北京

# BEIJING TODAY

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## THE IMAGINATION MACHINE

BUILDING ON HIS CHILDHOOD LOVE OF  
FANTASY WEAPONS, TANG HUI'S ART BLENDS  
WILD MACHINES AND SUPER-REALISM. **P.4**



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# FEATURE STORY



Photo by CFP

## Truckers Forced to Pick Between Profits and Law

BY YANG XIN

**T**he suicide of a truck-driving couple in Minquan County, Shangqiu, Henan province is drawing attention to the dark side of China's booming logistics industry.

After being driven to despair by a 30,000 yuan fine for exceeding the highway's weight limit, Zhang Gaoxing and his wife Hou Yan attempted drank pesticide on November 24. Hou survived the suicide attempt but remains in a coma.

Their attempt is similar to that of Liu Wenli, a female trucker in Yongcheng, Henan province who tried to kill herself last November after receiving simultaneous fines from the local transportation administration and the Department of Highway Management. In only a year, Liu was written 200,000 yuan in tickets.

While it's hard to sympathize with irresponsible drivers, the government and law enforcement are not without blame. The Ministry of Communications released regulations related to curb overloaded vehicles in 2000, but 14 years later they remain purposefully ignored.

### Built to Break the Law

China's logistics industry not only encourages truckers to break the law: it requires it.

At the National Party Congress of 2011, delegate Huang Xihua submitted a bill based on his research into the cost of freight transport. According to the bill, a lawfully loaded cargo truck carrying 16 tons from Datong, Shanxi province to Tianjin without breaking

the law will not only fail to earn money – it will lose more than 3,200 yuan.

Zhang Gaoxing normally carried freights between Yongcheng and Xinmi, Henan province. The fixed route cost 3,800 yuan to complete when considering fuel expenses, driver salary and road costs. By the local rate, a 47-ton cargo load is worth only 4,700 yuan leaving Zhang with a profit of 900 yuan.

"No one can earn anything in this industry without massive overloading. Even carrying one extra ton only earns you another 50 yuan," said a friend of Zhang.

To understand the problem, one has to approach it from the industry's perspective. Logistics is the fastest growing business in China: last year, it generated 19.78 billion yuan with an annual growth rate of 11.5 percent, *China Youth Daily* reported.

China has one of the most expensive supply chains in the world. Statistics from the 2014 China Procurement Development Report found that in 2013, the total logistics costs were about equal to 18 percent of the national GDP – twice as much as in most developed countries.

But even with that development, logistics costs account for 30 to 40 percent of the final cost of any product.

"With rising costs, toll charges and tickets from highway departments and traffic police, truckers barely have any room to earn money," said Wang Chuantao, a known commentator.

Of the three, road tolls have accounted for more than a third of all logistical costs

every year since 2011, said the China Federation of Logistics and Purchasing.

It's not hard to understand why the truckers feel so abused. "We have no choice in the matter. The freights are overweight before we even pick them up! If I refuse to take it, someone else will," said a trucker who refused to be named.

In some cases, consignors and consignees lure more honest truckers into carrying overweight freights by claiming they will roll any fines into the shipping cost, *Huashang Daily* reported.

### Government to Blame

In 2013, Tencent conducted a poll to ask its Web readers who should bear the blame for overloaded trucks: 95 percent of the respondents said the government.

As the nexus of the country, Henan province has been eager to fill its coffers by bleeding the logistics industry for anything it can. With the money to be made on fines, the province's law enforcement has no incentive to discourage companies from dumping their overweight freights on truckers.

Feng Qingyang, an online commentator, said regional differences play some role in the issue. "Arbitrary fines and tickets are the domain of China's less-developed central and western regions where everyone still rushes to find a job with a government. This leads to overstuffed institutions that need to be subsidized with public money, and the easiest money comes from fines," Feng said.

There are more than 6,500 govern-

ment employees in the transportation bureau of Liangyuan district in Shangqiu, Henan province alone.

"The administrators are swimming in fines. Penalizing drivers is their primary source of income," said Zhang Xiaodong, a professor of communications and transportation at Beijing Jiaotong University.

In 2011, Xuchang.net said that the local government was purposely encouraging truckers to carry heavy loads so it could prop up its budget with the fines.

It's little surprise that Henan province has become the center of trucker suicides.

The province's bureaucratic nightmare only makes it harder to find someone to blame. While law enforcement agents have authority over public safety in cases over overloading, highway authorities can also take over. But the highway itself is regulated by both the highway administration, which enforces the laws, and the transportation administration, which makes the laws.

Wang Jinwu, a civil rights activist, said it is this jumbled overlap that puts so much pressure on truckers.

"The current legal system gives five departments including traffic police departments, road administrators, highway transportation departments, toll stations and even Chengguan the right to regulate weight while specifying no standard penalty or punishment," he said.

"While toll stations charge fines according to the carrying weights of different trucks, the other four have different standards."

"For example, Chengguan have the right to write tickets according to the City Management Regulations. No matter whether you drive overloaded or not, you receive a ticket from the Chengguan as long as your truck exceeds the weight limit of a certain district. Fines are capped 16,000 yuan," Wang said.

The vicious market competition eating into the other side of truckers' profits is the result of other neglected regulation.

"The administrative loopholes lure truckers to overload their vehicles, which depresses market prices and crushes the trucking industry in other regions," Wang said.

In a recent report on China Road and Transport Online, many truckers blamed the government's carrying capacity standards for their misfortune.

"Many trucks, while built to carry 10 tons, are regulated as 5-ton vehicles by administrators. Some trucks are made and licensed even though they exceed the standard road safety length and width," the report said.

### Solution Urgent

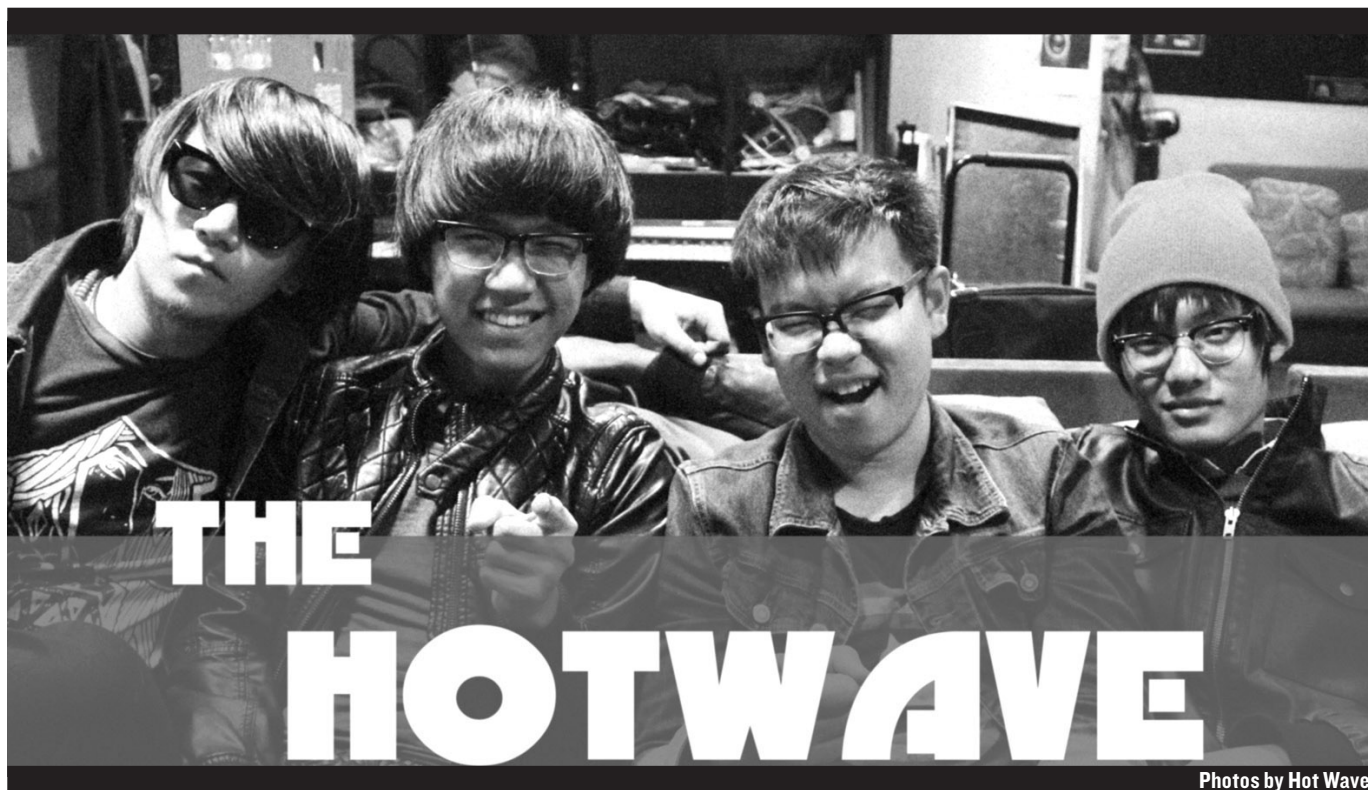
In 2011, the State Council released its Road Safety Protection Ordinance, which specifies that a driver caught driving overloaded more than three times will be barred from the business. If the ordinance were executed, it would be a strong incentive to keep overloaded trucks off the road.

"But right now, the government has no interest in putting the law into practice. The leaders aren't willing to bear the consequences of its execution, a slowdown in the logistics industry could ripple and drag down the entire Chinese economy," Zhang Xiaodong said.

Until then, China's truckers will continue to feel the squeeze. ■



# MUSIC



Photos by Hot Wave

## How Wave Dumps the Effects for a Return to Garage Rock

BY DIAO DIAO

Only four years ago, the local music scene was dominated by the technical post rock style that makes heavy use of pedals and effects. But new bands seem to be reacting with a simpler sound: garage rock.

The highly emotive style has its roots in the punk movement of the 1970s and the retro indie rock of the 1980s. The local band Hot Wave sees itself as carrying on that torch.

With a sound that's easy to love and fun to come back to, Hot Wave has been touring the local circuit with its original songs, which currently number more than 15.

The band is the creation of Zhang Honggang, a guitarist and former member of Penicillin, and Da Chao, a drummer. The two recruited Zhang's high school classmate Wang Dongyang as a second guitarist and found bassist Meng Yi after a performance earlier this year.

"Wang and I come up with the rough songs and write the lyrics with Da Chao. We work together as a group to revise the song, then call in Meng when it's time to record," Zhang says.

But writing and composition are rarely smooth.

Zhang said the compositions often get stuck and come out like a stutterer trying to speak a clear sentence. "It feels awful," he said. "My friends always say the songs sound fine, but I know they're not clean enough to perform."

The band's favorite song to date is "Gonna Shake? Or Wanna Break?" When talking about the song, Zhang gets excited about finding listeners to appreciate the song's deeper meaning.

"It was an extremely difficult song to write. Basically, it's about my own fantasy of the band performing on a big stage at a music festival. We are interviewed about being pioneers in China's new musical era," he says. "But words can never capture the charm of music. It all depends on the performance – whether it gets you up and moving."

The song is the band's first to make use of a synthesizer.

Beyond the stage, the four musicians lead fairly ordinary lives. Zhang works as a designer in an advertising company where he tries to save money so Hot Wave can cut an album next year.

"I feel the power of music when listeners tell us what they think," Zhang says. He also likes singing for his mom.

Zhang says his music is mostly related to his personality. He is an extremely emotional person and says that highs and lows are essential to give rock a unique sound.

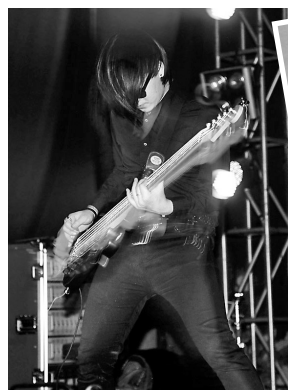
Though they were performing one guitar short earlier this month, the group is expected to be together again for their upcoming show at School Bar. ■

### School Bar

December 20, 9-11:30 pm

53 Wudaoying Hutong, Dongcheng

30 yuan



## LIVE SHOW ROUNDUP

Beijing boasts one of the world's most vibrant indie music scenes. Support our local artists with a trip to one of this week's live performances!

### Wanzhong Band @ Yugong Yishan

Yugong Yishan is inviting rock bands to its yearend party. Wanzhong Band, one of the participants, was founded in 2012 and consists of longtime Beijing rock musicians Ying Peng, Fu Dalong, Hu Yang, Wang Zhengwei and Wang Yue.

December 20, 7:30-11:30 pm

3-2 Zhangzizhong Lu, Dongcheng

100 yuan pre sale, 120 yuan at door



### Candy Monster @ MAO Live House

In the last eight years, the indie rock band Candy Monster has gone from Shengyang to Beijing and from the streets to Mississippi. Their debut album, *How Many Stations Are There from the Zoo to Gulou*, is more like the band's music diary. It is being released following next Thursday's show at MAO Live House.

December 20, 8:30 pm

111 Guloudong Dajie, Dongcheng

50 yuan pre sale, 80 yuan at door

### V-Day @ Lanxi Bar

V-Day is an old indie group from Nanjing that plays Britpop. The band has found a following in northern China thanks to its catalog of great songs and strong stage presence.

December 20, 9:30-11:30 pm

183 Jiugulou Dajie, Xicheng

40 yuan



### Auburn Band @ Monkey Mountain Club

Auburn Band is performing at Monkey Mountain Club to celebrate its first album. The songs try to slow down the pace of life with songs that fluctuate from soft to noisy.

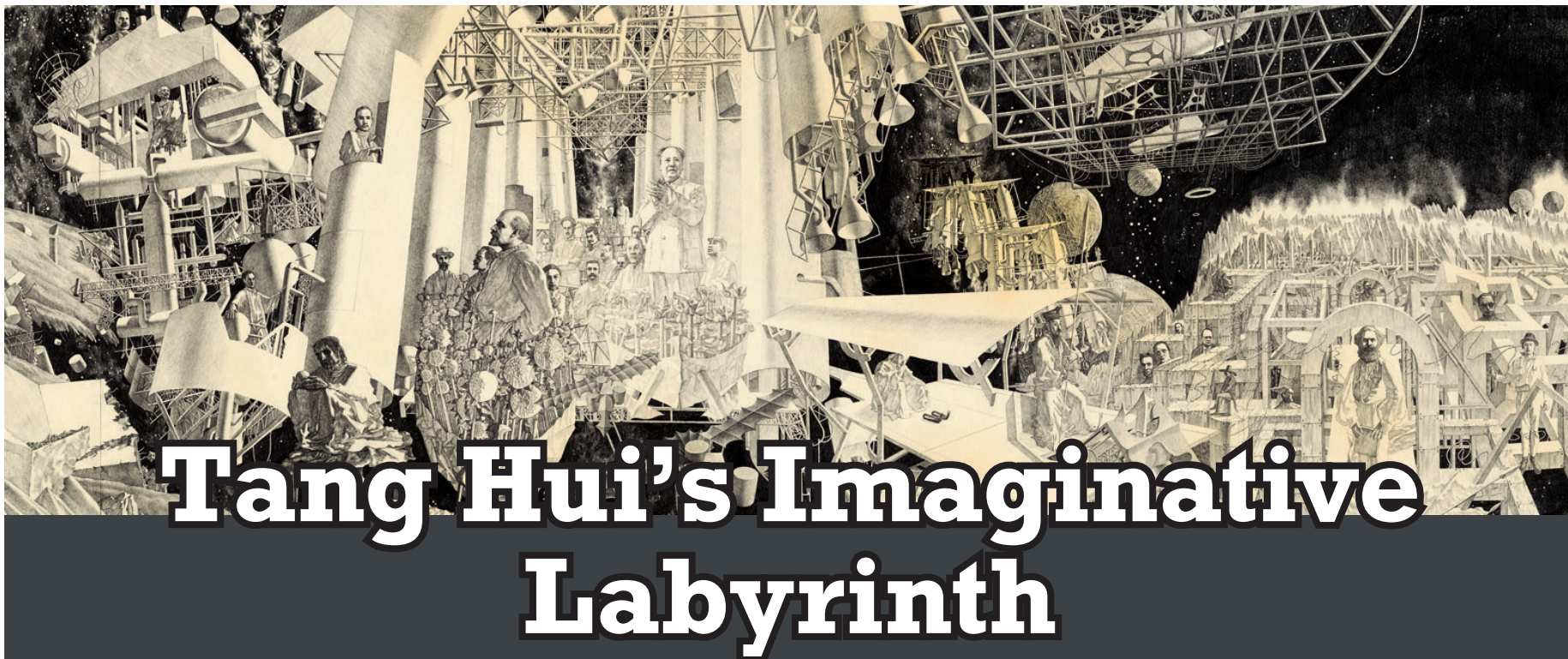
December 20, 9-11:30 pm

8 Dongdaqiao Lu, Chaoyang

40 yuan



# ARTISTS



## Tang Hui's Imaginative Labyrinth

BY LYNNE WANG

**W**hile some artists create to find public recognition or follow popular genres, Tang Hui has endeavored to explore his own language since stepping into world of art some two decades ago. His grand images of machines show an imagination with few boundaries.

Tang's unusual style began in the early 1990s with *In Time*, the first capstone project to ever be awarded full marks by the Central Academy of Fine Arts.

The seven-meter-long sketch depicts 100 of the world's ideologists, philosophers, politicians and strategists from ancient times to the present. The scene combines outer space, weapons and fantastic mechanical elements to express a deep sense of super-realism and visual impact.

"With the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1989, Communist-bloc countries witnessed earth-shaking changes. Many youth started to think about problems with the socialist movement. As an art student, I tried to express my own attitude through that piece," Tang says.

Drawing on his rich knowledge of philosophy and military affairs, *In Time* accurately depicts the correlation between

time and space and social relationships, says Wang Huangsheng, curator of the Art Museum at the Central Academy of Fine Arts.

Tang's wild images come from a childhood obsession with imaginary warships.

Born in 1968 in Wuhan, Tang was destined for a career in painting. Both his grandparents and parents were artists who enjoyed a strong reputation in the Republican Era and early modern China.

"When I was a little boy, I was told that painting was just a way to relax," Tang says. "I only painted what I liked – fantastic machines and guns that could never exist in reality. I liked them just like every girl likes princesses. Many elements of my art are a continuation of that childhood hobby."

Tang's childhood makes it a little easier to understand the abstract fusion of machine parts and human bodies that followed his graduation. In *Time Machine*, a variety of deconstructed elements like steam-powered bicycles, flying cells and aerolites contrast with the dark corridor through time and space.

"I'm always interested in space and time because everything is possible at their

junction. I prefer to offer viewers a 'visual surprise' at this intersection," Tang says.

If Tang's works in the 1990s displayed his curiosity as a passionate young man, his works of the past decade are more nostalgic. The atmosphere has shifted from complex to simple – even romantic.

In the *Monument*, a series created in 2008, normal people like workers and couples clad in 1960s clothing look to the sky with ambiguous facial expressions. Because the series was painted on flax, its pictures have a hazy and dreamy texture. *Beijing Business Today* said the contrast served as a combination of nostalgia and a sarcastic commentary on socialist utopias.

"Monument is neither political pop art or about socialist utopias," Tang says. "It's just part of my aesthetic approach. I was fascinated with the education environment of the past. But when I look at the significant difference between that era and today, I feel lost and sad."

The 46-year-old Tang still believes happiness is the most important element in creation. He has never stopped experimenting with different types of

artistic language and materials. While most of his works are murals, Tang is also obsessed with displaying his wild ideas in 3D. His installation *Tang Town Project* attracted attention in art circles earlier in 2003.

"From history, we can see an artist is likely to be remembered if he or she stabilizes a particular style. Focusing on a type of image has a branding effect on the market," says Li Lingyan, an art critic for *Top Floor*.

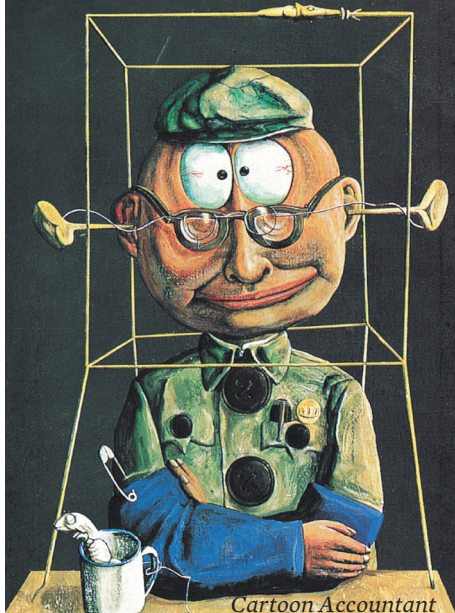
Tang is a part of the minority of Chinese artists who create for their own interests and refuse to reach for the "business button."

"I don't regret the approach. I always try my best and enjoy myself," Tang says. "I will label my art experience as 'looking up at the starry sky.'"

Since graduating from the Central Academy of Fine Arts in 1991, Tang has remained on campus as a teacher. This year, Tang was promoted to the dean of mural department. He will have two exhibitions in 2015. ■

📍 tang-hui.com

📱 唐晖room (weibo.com/tanghuiroom)



Cartoon Accountant



Let's Compare Our Teeth



Monument-GT

Photos by Tang Hui





# CINEMA

## 'Fleet of Time' Viewers Have Nothing but Venom

BY DIAO DIAO



Ni Ni plays Fang Hui



Peng Yuyan plays Chen Xun

Photos by Douban.com

The famous novel *Fleet of Time* was adapted into an online drama earlier this year. While both the book and serial were popular with all ages, the new film version released on December 5 has been nothing short of reviled.

Social media websites and WeChat streams have been flooded with complaints about how even free tickets wouldn't make the movie watchable. We spent the week sorting through the noise to find the Top 5 reasons Chinese viewers say the month's most anticipated film was a turd.

### 1. Wrong Actors

When adding the ages of your two leading actors yields a number higher than 60, you might want to rethink your plans to cast them as high school students.

Peng Yuyan, who plays Chen Xun, may be handsome – but only from certain angles. And unfortunately, none of those angles appeared in the film. The popular heartthrob ends up looking like an average creeper. Worse yet, Peng's strong Taiwanese accent totally clashes with his character, who is supposed to be a native Beijinger.

Ni Ni, who played Mo Yu in *The Flowers of the War* in 2011, stars as Fang Hui in the movie. While Ni is certainly beautiful, her strange makeup ruins what nature gave her.

### 2. Jumbled Structure

Fans were quick to notice Zhang Yibai, who also shot *Eternal Moment* in 2011, directed the film.

Zhang's trademark appears to be films with jumbled structures, incomplete sto-

rylines, blank faces and dialogue that amounts to little more than screaming and shouting.

The movie also abuses slow-motion shots in a misguided attempt to shoehorn sentimentality into a picture that is totally devoid of emotion.

### 3. Too Much Nostalgia

The 1990s were great, but they were 15 years ago! The film *Fleet of Time* somehow crams even more 1990s music into its soundtrack than there was on the radio during the decade.

With so many songs, Su Huilun's "Duck" and Dongli Huoche's "Dang" seem to take over the film. Most viewers said it feels like a forced collection of 1990s vignettes rather than a touching story.

### 4. Bad Vibes

It's hard not to notice that all the youth

films this year seem to revolve around abortion. Both Ruan Guan in *So Young* and Zhou Xiaozhi in *My Old Classmate* had abortions at a very young age.

It's almost like the film industry is trying to depict abortion as a rite of passage for modern youth.

### 5. Nothing New

The popularity of youth films has inspired no shortage of me-too copycats. Some viewers said that all it takes to make a "youth film" is a CD of 1990s music and a few references to NATO's bombing of the Chinese Embassy to Yugoslavia in 1999.

A slew of obvious product placements don't help to convince viewers that *Fleet of Time* is offering anything new. At the end of the day, it appears to be a sad squandering of what should have been excellent source material. ■

## Celebrity Writers Weigh in on Youth Education

BY DIAO DIAO

If you're on the hunt for an educational Christmas gift, a book may be a much better choice than any toy or treat.

*Take the Letter When You Grow Up*, a new release by Zhang Quanling, mirrors the story of a child growing up by dividing its content into three sections

of self-discovery. The text contains letters from 30 of China's most recognizable writers, actors and singers.

Zhang's the book shows different approaches to education and gives celebrities a platform to express their wishes for their own children who are growing up in the public eye.

Chinese parents tend to be famously anxious about their children's education. Most obsess over giving their children the "best start," enrolling them in painting, piano and dance from a young age regardless of interest. The anxiety only worsens as the children face middle school admissions.

But the book, which consists of different idea about education, shows how such concepts are changing.

The letters accompany photos of relevant families and signatures. Aside from love, it also offers guid-

ance for life.

The writer Han Han explains a new world to his daughter by using flowers. Huang Lei, a director and actor who appeared on the popular TV show *Dad, Where Are We Going* is also a father of two girls. He wants his children to understand family, love and life.

Huang Han, a representative of women in the new era, encourages her 17-year-old daughter to be independent and tells her about the position of women in current society.

These personalities are all specialists in different fields, and together their ideas might inspire modern parents.

Children can also understand the book, and they are its real target audience. Both parents and children can learn something from the way others educate the next generation. ■





# A LOCAL OUTINGS



Photos by Mafengwo

## A Cathedral Bridging East and West

BY LI RUIQI

*For religious expats who are unable to make it home for Christmas this year, Beijing's Church of the Savior offers a great place to spend Christmas Eve. Its skyward-reaching steeples and arched gates are flanked by a pair of yellow-roofed Chinese pavilions. A statue of the virgin is embedded in the artificial hills by the rear.*

### Gothic-Chinese Church

Also known as Xishiku Church and Beitang, the Church of the Savior is an ingenious combination of Gothic facade and Chinese imperial garden. Its two Chinese pavilions house a pair of stone tablets that record how the church was built and relocated in both Chinese and Manchurian.

The church is home to one of the most effective localizations of Catholicism in Chinese history: the painting of the Chinese Madonna and child.

The stunning portrait features a very Chinese Mary cradling an infant Jesus with both dressed in the imperial robes of the Qing Dynasty. Created by an unknown foreigner living in Shanghai, the original painting was burned during the Cultural Revolution. The current painting is a reproduction by Zhu Jiaju, a Hong Kong painter who recreated the image in 1850.

Also noteworthy is the statue of the virgin, which was built into an existing Chinese imperial garden that complemented the church.

A pair of Chinese couplets flanks a statue of Mary and Jesus in one corner of the church. The verses tell about God and creation used style that mimics the format of the poetry in many temples and ancestral halls.

While most European churches are built facing east, the Church of the Savior faces south. According to Chinese architectural reckoning, superior mansions must sit on a north-south axis and face to the south, as seen in the buildings throughout the Forbidden City.

Chinese elements can be found throughout the yard and include a lotus

carved in the red gate and dragonhead drains in place of gargoyles. The fences are made of hanbaiyu, a precious stone that symbolize elegance and holiness.

### History

A pair of French preachers founded the Church of the Savior in 1693 after being awarded a building site in the city center for having cured the Kangxi Emperor of malaria. The church stood to the west of the Forbidden City for 200 years until it was demolished to facilitate the expansion of Zhongnanhai.

The church was rebuilt in its current form by Bishop Pierre-Marie-Alphonse Favier in 1887. However, most of the structures were seriously damaged during the Boxer Rebellion, when the church provided protection to nearly 3,900 women and children.

After the fall of the Republican government, the church became the office of the Beijing Low-Pressure Electric Factory in the 1950s. ■

⌚ 5 am - 6 pm  
📍 33 Xishiku Dajie, Xicheng  
💎 Free  
☎ (010) 6617 5198

🚌 Take Line 4 and get off at Xisi Station Exit D. Walk 910 meters east.  
🚌 Take Buses 685, 103 or 109 and get off at Xianmen Station. Walk 199 meters north to the church entrance.

Christmas Eve mass is at 5 pm, 7 pm and 11 pm. The final mass of the evening will have chorus and pipe organ.

### Eating Near the Church

#### Sanyuan Meiyuan

Try the original flavor cheese and the red bean shuangpinai if you visit.

📍 51 Xisinan Dajie, Xicheng  
☎ (010) 6617 6381  
💎 16 yuan per person

#### Guhuai Baoding

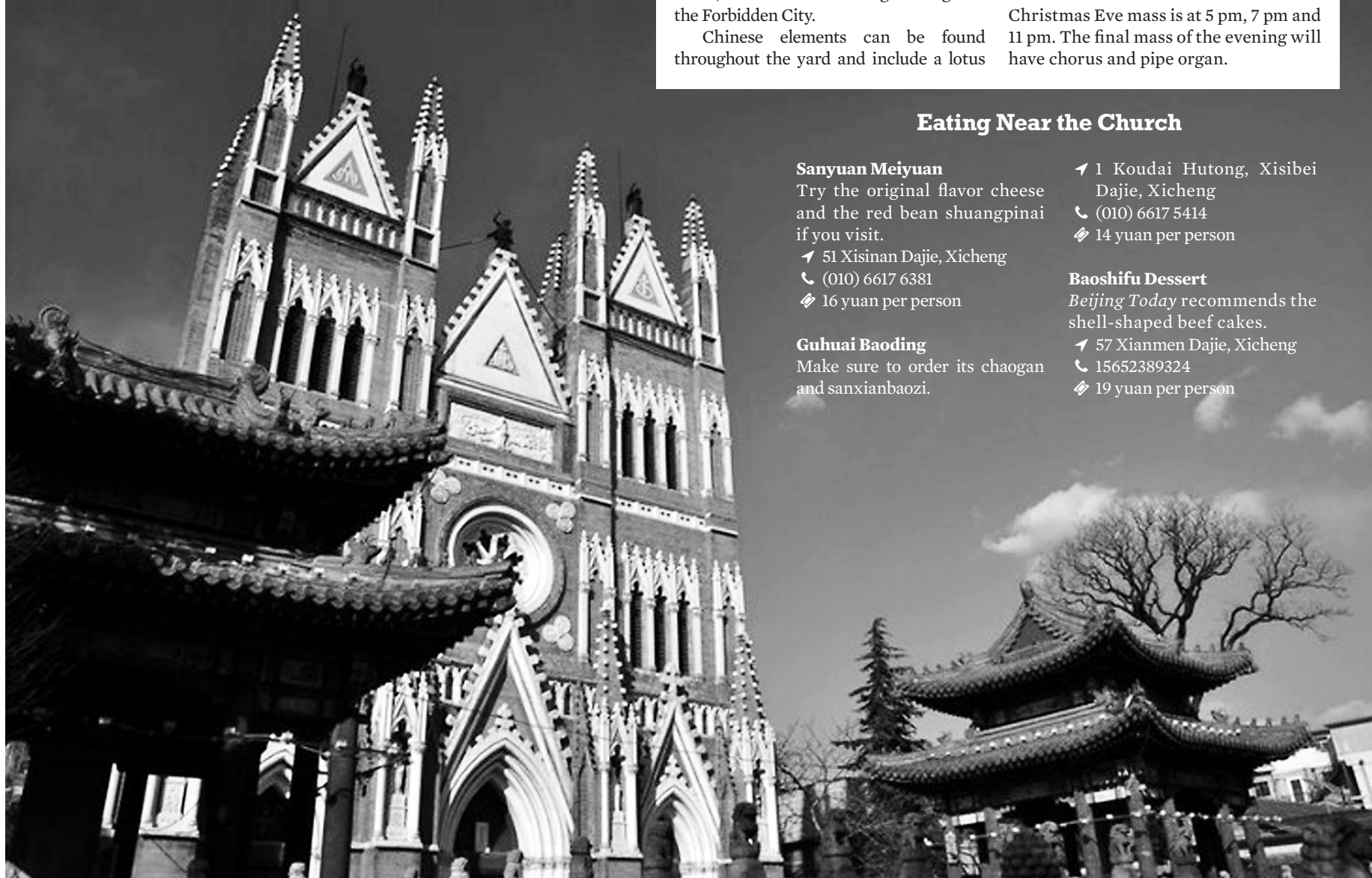
Make sure to order its chaogan and sanxianbaozi.

📍 1 Koudai Hutong, Xisibei Dajie, Xicheng  
☎ (010) 6617 5414  
💎 14 yuan per person

#### Baoshifu Dessert

*Beijing Today* recommends the shell-shaped beef cakes.

📍 57 Xianmen Dajie, Xicheng  
☎ 15652389324  
💎 19 yuan per person





# Q CLASSIFIEDS

## ART



### Lina Photography Exhibition: Amusement Park

Born in Guangxi, Lina is a graduate of Communication University of China and Waseda University. Although she has recorded some documentaries and written some essays, Lina still considers herself a "little girl."

"My Amusement Park" is her collection of pictures taken since 2009. It includes shots of Beijing, Tokyo, Setonai, Sydney, Yunnan, Bali, Phuket Island and her hometown.

Her images show Sydney Beach under dark clouds, howling performers on the streets of Shinjuku, psychedelic nights in Shibuya, the smiles of the children on Bali and the ranging emotions of hutong inhabitants. Lina faithfully records the people she meets on her travels.

"As time flows and locations change, I find I am gradually growing up. Though stumbling along, I am fortunate to follow my heart and live in a free and unfettered way," she said.

⌚ 2 pm - midnight, through December 21  
 ↗ MUYE ART SPACE,  
 20 Jingtū Hutong, Dongcheng  
 ☎ (010) 8403 0412 / (010) 8408 3772

## DINING



### 2014 Christmas Eve Feast All the Way at Hilton Beijing Wangfujing

Hilton Beijing Wangfujing invites you to experience a grand dinner party featuring with fantastic food for your loved ones this coming Christmas.

The hotel's fifth floor restaurants will

combine for a Christmas Eve dinner party presenting annual fantastic food festivals with traditional Beijing hutong and authentic Taiwanese foods, Spanish flavors and delicious Australian specials.

Aside from Christmas classics, such as roasted turkey, chipolatas, cranberry sauce, Brussels sprouts, homemade terrines and popular desserts, this superb feast will bring out the best of the year like Beijing roast duck and hutong snacks. For Taiwanese style, enjoy sweet pineapple pastries, delicious three cups chicken and Taiwanese beef noodles. The rich Spanish paella rice and variety of tapas will give you a romantic Mediterranean feeling. In addition, the beef and seafood from Australia will bring the warmest greetings from the Southern Hemisphere.

The night's raffle will feature a grand prize of the latest iPhone 6, Hilton room vouchers, dining vouchers and other surprises. Live musical entertainment will complete the experience for an unforgettable Christmas Eve.

⌚ 6-9:30 pm, December 24  
 ↗ Hilton Beijing Wangfujing,  
 Wangfujing Dong Jie, Dongcheng  
 💎 555 yuan per person (333 yuan for children 6-12)  
 ☎ (010) 5812 8888 ext.8411  
 🌐 [www1.hilton.com/en\\_US/hi/hotel/BJSWFHI-Hilton-Beijing-Wangfujing/index.do](http://www1.hilton.com/en_US/hi/hotel/BJSWFHI-Hilton-Beijing-Wangfujing/index.do)



### Around the World in Three Hours on Christmas Eve

Embark on a fun-filled and memorable Christmas trip around the world with Crowne Plaza Beijing Sun Palace and feast on an international buffet prepared by master chefs on wonderful Christmas Eve.

Guests can enjoy a lively evening of music and dance to warm the wintery night while taking in the most exciting Broadway show in town. Fantastic global buffet at Red Orange featuring roasted turkey, prime ribs from Australia, Boston lobster, seafood sushi and sashimi, Thai spices, French foie gras, Paella, Brazil BBQ, American oysters and endless drinks.

⌚ 6 - 10 pm, December 24  
 ↗ Crowne Plaza Beijing,  
 48 Wangfujing Dajie, Dongcheng  
 💎 888 yuan  
 ☎ (010) 6513 3388  
 🌐 [crowneplaza.com](http://crowneplaza.com)

## MUSIC



### Lisa Ono New Year Concert

In Portuguese, bossa nova means "new trend." The style originated in Brazil in the 1950s and acquired a large following in the 1960s among American jazz artists, gradually becoming a vital part of Latin American music and classic jazz.

In the 1990s, a Japanese-Brazilian girl who started singing bossa nova and samba at her father's restaurant won attention from several recording companies and became the top bossa nova vocalist of her generation. Lisa Ono will perform a New Year's concert this year at Workers' Gymnasium in Beijing.

Ono has released 30 albums, including eight golds and two platinums. Not only is she a professional singer, she is also the artist who brought bossa nova into the international pop music scene and influenced a whole generation.

⌚ 7:30 - 9:30 pm, January 1  
 ↗ Workers' Gymnasium, Gongti Bei Lu,  
 Chaoyang  
 💎 480 - 1, 280 yuan  
 ☎ (010) 6501 6300  
 🌐 [ppoppp.com/t186.html](http://ppoppp.com/t186.html)



### Chime of Bell: NCPA New Year's Concert

The National Ballet of China Symphony Orchestra, founded in 1959 under the National Ballet of China, is the only professional ballet orchestra in China.

Zhang Yi is the music director and chief conductor and Liu Ju is the resident conductor. Orchestra members are graduates of renowned conservatories in Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjin and other places. The average age of its performers is 35 years old. All are excellent performers and the product of their rigorous professional training.

⌚ 11 pm - 1 am, December 31  
 ↗ National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA), 2 Chang'an Jie, Xicheng

💎 200 - 1,080 yuan  
 ☎ (010) 6655 0000  
 ✉ [ponypiao@damai.cn](mailto:ponypiao@damai.cn)  
 🌐 [en.damai.cn/event/tickets\\_75156/](http://en.damai.cn/event/tickets_75156/)

## NIGHTLIFE



### PENG: VERY XMAS 2014

Electronic music label PENG was founded in 2006 by Pancake Lee together with a bunch of friends driven by their passion for electronic music in all its forms and expressions.

In 2013, Pancake and Santi Musmeci decided to reinvent PENG as a nightlife brand. Since then, it has been on the pulse of fashion and trend, bringing new ideas to Beijing's night scene while maintaining its unique style and spirit.

PENG has planned a carnival on December 20 at Migas. Its designers Santi and Sohan have created special Christmas gifts for the visitors. Electronic music veteran Zuckermann from Berlin will come with Peng, senior Beijing DJ Leslie Jaycee and Pancake Lee to take visitors' minds and bodies to the "vertex of 2014!"

#### DJs:

- ▶ Pancake Lee (PENG/B-SIDE, Beijing)
- ▶ Zuckermann (LEBENSFREUDE RECORDS, Berlin)
- ▶ Leslie Jaycee (HOUSE RABBITS, Beijing)

#### VJ:

- ▶ DUDE

⌚ 10 pm - 6 am, December 20  
 ↗ The Bar at Migas, 6F Nali Patio,  
 81 Sanlitun Lu, Chaoyang  
 💎 60 yuan (door)  
 ☎ 5650789525 (Chinese) /  
 18701570686 (English)

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# BEIJING'S DOUZHI!



Photos by douguo.com & CFP

## Developing a Taste for Fermented Soymilk

BY DIAO DIAO

**W**hile Chinese food may be famous for its easily accepted flavor and delicate preparation, douzhi is a glaring exception. The notorious Beijing beverage can be intimidating at first sniff – and first taste.

Native Beijingers are almost unanimous in their love of douzhi and jiaoquan, fried rings typically served with the drink. But for newcomers to the city, the powerful odor and sour taste can be tough to get past. Though the drink is falling out of favor in recent years, it remains an important element of traditional Beijing cuisine and has a history spanning some 300 hundred years.

Douzhi is made by stripping the starch from ground green beans and fermenting what's left. The color is an awkward mixture of green and grey and the texture is thick. It's especially popular in

winter and spring, as the cold weather helps to keep the drink from rotting so quickly.

Records of douzhi can be found as early as the Liao and Song dynasties, though it never became in vogue until around 1754. The drink was a favorite of many ordinary families in Old Beijing, and was apparently known by the Qianlong Emperor who dispatched his chancellors to bring him a taste.

Most Beijingers will recall their first experience with the drink as one of abject horror and disgust. It's especially jarring given the sweet treats that usually accompany a bowl of douzhi. But as is the case with many delicacies, douzhi is a taste that grows on you.

An Old Beijing saying claims you haven't really been to the capital if you didn't taste douzhi. Peking Opera master Mei Lanfang was reportedly a big fan of the drink, as was musician Wang Luobin before he passed away.

Most people who order a bowl of hot douzhi pair it with jiaoquan, fried circles made of flour, and xiancai, salty pickled vegetables that can help to balance out the sour taste.

As well as buying from shops, many Beijing families make their own at home. Raw douzhi takes some time to prepare, but after boiling can be consumed directly. ■

### MAKE YOUR OWN WITH THIS RECIPE

## Ferment Your Own Douzhi at Home

BY DIAO DIAO

**R**egardless of how you feel about douzhi's potent taste, the drink is an important part of Beijing culture. You can easily make your own to share with friends if you're unable to find it outside the capital.

#### Ingredients:

- 350g beans
- 3,000g water



#### The Steps:

1. Clean the beans and remove any impurities. Soak the beans in water for 24 hours. Remove and grind into a thin paste. You should combine eight parts water with one part beans.
2. Filter the paste twice. Remove any waste bubbles from the top. The raw douzhi, bean grounds and starch will sink to the bottom. Remove the starch. Filter the douzhi and grounds. The coarse grounds can be used to make Matofu, a cold dish.
3. Ferment the rest of the liquid at 35 °C for 4 hours. If the temperature is lower, it will take longer to ferment. Heat it over a low flame once the liquid takes on a sour smell.
4. When you see bubbles, reduce the flame even further. The goal is to keep it just shy of boiling.

## Baoji Douzhi Shop Best for Beijing Snacks

BY DIAO DIAO

**S**earching for authentic douzhi and other traditional Beijing snacks? Baoji is the most recommended shop for cheap and authentic drinks.

Baoji Douzhi Shop is a time-honored shop in Beijing and it's easy to spot with its blue signboard near Niujie. Though it only provides take-away service, its clean environment and tasty douzhi make it popular with locals.

A big bag of douzhi costs 5 yuan and is enough to serve more than three people.

To make douzhi's potent aroma acceptable to more customers, Baoji has a few tricks to lighten the strong taste while keeping the traditional style of preparation.

Baoji also sells other snacks such as chaohongguo, cooked and pickled hawthorns that taste sweet and sour and open the appetite. It's ludagun, made of sticky rice powder and red bean paste, aiwowo, made of nuts and sticky rice, and tangerduo, a sweet twist soaked in brown sugar are all popular.

All food served in the shop meets the requirements of Halal for Muslim customers. ■

#### Baoji Douzhi Shop

➔ 27 Niujie Shuru Hutong, Xicheng  
☎ (010) 6353 5728



Baoji Douzhi Shop



Hawthorn Jelly



Chaohongguo

Photos by dianping.com